



More Frequently Asked Questions For our New Parents

Below are some answers to the most frequently asked questions to help guide you as you begin with us.

1. When can my child come home?

Generally there are breaks every 4 to 6 weeks (these are listed on the School Calendar) and they range in length from 4 to 20 days depending on whether they occur mid-term or at the end of the term. Especially on the shorter breaks, students look forward to simple things: sleeping in their own bed, having some of their favourite meals and just spending down time with family and friends. It is a good practice to set aside time for them to do just that. They are very busy here at school and many demands are made on their time and energy. They really look forward to relaxing at home.

When making your travel plans, pay particular attention to the posted times for departure and return. The Transportation Office will help guide your travel decisions. You may also rely on the advice of the House Director who you may contact to clarify any details relating to permissions.

2. What are the guidelines for “Leave Weekends”?

In between the breaks, there are opportunities to go home for an overnight (these are also posted on the School Calendar by term). Leave weekends begin following sports on Saturday with students departing campus by bus at 3:00 pm to catch the 5:00 pm ferries from Swartz Bay or Nanaimo. They must return by 10:00 pm on Sunday. Students coming from Vancouver should take the 7:00 pm ferries from Tsawwassen and Horseshoe Bay. A bus will meet them here on the Island to bring them back to the School. In this case, leave begins after school on Friday with students leaving again at 3:00 pm for the 5:00 pm ferries. The return time is the same on the Sunday of a double overnight. While these are very short visits, again, they offer some time for students to go home or visit a friend’s house to relax.

If a child needs to be absent overnight at a time other than scheduled leaves, permission must be sought well in advance from Jo-Anne Kingstone, Deputy Head. This is “special leave” and permission is generally given for major family occasions (weddings, memorials, significant birthdays or celebrations) or emergencies. Absences from classes for concerts, family holidays or conveniences should not be requested.

3. What should I do if I have a question about my child’s academic programme?

Your first point of contact for academics is the advisor. The advisor will help answer your questions and also connect you to the appropriate person if you have questions specifically related to a subject teacher, tutoring, support from the Learning Centre, University Guidance or course selections.

4. When is it okay to call or email?

In short: anytime. We are here to help you and your child make this the very best experience possible. You know your child very well and have had the courage and foresight to send him or her to us here at Shawnigan. We are happy to work with you and share in the responsibility of educating and nurturing your child. For that reason, the more we communicate with each other, the better. If you have any question or concern, please do not ever hesitate to contact any one of us who can help.